

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Yellen,

We write to offer our congratulations on your confirmation to be the 78th Secretary of the Department of the Treasury. As you begin work on the myriad challenges facing our economy, we wanted to draw your attention to one policy in particular where we hope to work with you in the coming years.

Never in the history of our nation has a woman or person of color been depicted on any denomination of our paper currency. Portraying a woman on one of the most important symbols of American society recognizes the contributions of the full diversity of significant American historical figures, including women. Congressional support for these efforts exists as well, as exemplified by this letter and others like it as well as legislation that has been previously introduced.

Most recently, after a lengthy process of public input, including thousands of public comments, the Department announced in 2016 plans for a series of changes to our paper currency, including that it had selected Harriet Tubman to be depicted on the \$20 bill during the next redesign of that denomination. Our understanding, corroborated by public reporting¹, is that much of the work of that redesign was well underway, when the previous Administration indicated it would not be moving forward with the update in 2020.

We hope sincerely that is no longer the case, and encourage the prioritization of Ms. Tubman before working on other redesigns. We stand ready to offer any support for your efforts to ensure this towering figure in our nation's history receives the recognition she has deserved for so long. Our currency tells the story of our nation, and it is long past due for Ms. Tubman's part of that story to be told.

Accordingly, we urge the Department under your leadership to move swiftly with this redesign so these notes can enter circulation as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Ben Sasse
United States Senator

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/14/us/politics/harriet-tubman-bill.html>